

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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17

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

OMB-01 SCCT-01 SAM-01 SAJ-01 AID-05 ACDA-05 SSO-00

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R 060515Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3357

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

CONFIDENTIAL DAMASCUS 1636

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SY, IZ

SUBJ: SYRIA-IRAQI RELATIONS

1. RAFIK JOUEJATI, FONMINISTRY'S WESTERN EUROPE DIRECTOR, HAS CONFIRMED RECENT BEIRUT PRESS STORY THAT ASAD IN MARCH EARLY APRIL ASKED A PLO DELEGATION HEADED BY ARAFAT TO CARRY A MESSAGE TO IRAQI PRESIDENT AL-BAKR WHICH INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING PROPOSAL. IF AL-BAKR WOULD AGREE TO DISSOLVE BAGHDAD'S NATIONAL BAATH PARTY COMMAND AND COLLABORATE WITH SYRIA TO CREATE A NEW SINGLE NATIONAL COMMAND TO REPLACE THE TWO EXISTING BODIES, THEN SYRIA WOULD DISAVOW UN RESOLUTIONS 338 AND 242 AND REFUSE ANY FURTHER CONTACT WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER. AL-BAKR REPORTEDLY REPLIED THAT HE HAD NO TRUST WHATSOEVER IN ASAD OR ANY MEMBERS OF THE PRESENT SYRIAN LEADERSHIP AND HE REJECTED THIS PROPOSITION.

2. COMMENT: IF THIS SO-CALLED "PROPOSAL" BY ASAD WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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INDEED TRANSMITTED IN MARCH/EARLY APRIL, IT WOULD HAVE

COINCIDED WITH PREPARATIONS FOR SYRIA'S BAATH PARTY
CONGRESS. IN THAT CONTEXT, IT MIGHHAVE BEEN EITHER A
SINCERE EFFORT TO BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN BAGHDAD AND
DAMASCUS OR, MORE LIKELY, IN OUR OPINION, AN EFFORT TO
DEMONSTRATE TO ASAD'S OWN FOLLOWERS THAT HE HAD SPARED
NO EFFORT TO RESTORE NORMAL TIES BUT THE IRAQIS WERE BEING
IMPOSSIBLE. I DO NOT BELIEVE SAID PROPOSAL SHOULD BE
INTERPRETED LITERALLY AS SYRIA'S READINESS TO ABANDON ITS
ASSOCIATION WITH US PEACEMAKING EFFORTS OR TO DISAVOW
ANY APPLICABLE UN RESOLUTIONS.

MURPHY

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